

January 2007

RE: EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0

Dear EDEExpress Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0. Release 1.0 is the initial EDEExpress software release for the 2007-2008 award cycle and includes the Application Processing and Packaging modules, as well as Global functionality (such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database).

This letter includes the following information:

- An overview of EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 1.0
- An overview of the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (the HERA), Pub. L. 109-171 and its impact on EDEExpress 2007-2008 releases
- A list of 2007-2008 enhancements available in Release 1.0
- Results gathered from EDEExpress benchmark testing
- Reminders on backing up and optimizing your EDEExpress database

Note: At this time, the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Fiscal Year 2007 Appropriation has not been approved. Therefore, the 2007-2008 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedule included in Release 1.0 is based on the current \$4,050 maximum Pell Grant award. After ED's Fiscal Year 2007 Appropriation is finalized, we will update, if necessary, the Pell Grant Payment Schedule through a future release of EDEExpress. If you use the EDEExpress Packaging module to award Pell Grants, you may want to wait until it is known if the Pell Payment Schedule will change.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

You can download Release 1.0 and related user documentation from the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Instructions for downloading EDEExpress are located in the "Downloading Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site" section of the *2007-2008 Installation Guide for EDEExpress for Windows*.

If you have trouble accessing the FSAdownload Web site, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at **800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806)** or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.

Note: Some organizations restrict their users from downloading programs from Internet sites. If you have trouble downloading, contact your technical support staff to ensure that you have full download rights.

If You Have Technical Support Questions

If you have questions regarding EDEExpress, such as installation issues, software problem resolution, or software functionality, or you require other technical assistance, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), at **800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806)**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to CPSSAIG@ed.gov. A representative will respond within one business day.

You can also post questions regarding EDEExpress on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information about FSATECH, including how to subscribe, go to fsa4schools.ed.gov, click “Listserves/Mailing Lists” on the left menu, and click the “FSATech” link.

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EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0

EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0 consists of two software modules:

- Application Processing
- Packaging

In addition, Global functionality applicable to all modules, such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database setup and entry, is added during any installation of EDEExpress.

EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 2.0 (scheduled for release in April 2007) will add Pell and Direct Loan functionality. The Pell module will include origination and disbursement functionality for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant).

Release 1.0 does not overwrite your EDEExpress for Windows 2006-2007 database; instead, it creates an entirely new and separate database.

Release 1.0 Enhancements Related to the HERA

During the 2007-2008 cycle, Federal Student Aid will continue to implement enhancements to the EDEExpress software related to provisions of the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (the HERA), Pub. L. 109-171. These enhancements will build upon or modify changes implemented for the HERA in the 2006-2007 versions of EDEExpress.

Enhancement releases were developed and posted for the EDEExpress 2006-2007 and Direct Loan (DL) Tools software to add functionality related to two new Title IV grant programs established by the HERA—the ACG and the National SMART Grant—and to modify existing Direct Loan functionality to enable processing of the Federal Direct PLUS Loan for graduate or professional students (as Grad PLUS loans).

Note: The HERA provides for eligible graduate or professional students to receive Direct PLUS Loans on or after July 1, 2006. The HERA provision does not create a new loan program; instead, the HERA enables a new type of borrower—an eligible graduate or professional student—to borrow under the existing Direct PLUS Loan Program. In EDEExpress 2007-2008, a Direct PLUS loan for a graduate or professional student is referred to as a “Grad PLUS” loan.

Also as a result of the HERA, some of the annual loan limits in the Direct Stafford Loan Program are increased. The EDEExpress 2007-2008 Packaging module and Direct Loan module (available in Release 2.0) include these new loan limits. For additional details on loan limit increases related to the HERA, see [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-06-02](#), posted on March 10, 2006 to the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, located at ifap.ed.gov.

Note: The higher loan limits apply to loans first disbursed on or after July 1, 2007. The COD System will use the date of the earliest anticipated disbursement (DRI = False) if there are no actual disbursements (DRI = True) when determining the appropriate loan limits to apply. The COD System will use the earliest actual disbursement, if both actual and anticipated disbursements exist for a loan, when determining the appropriate loan limits to apply. Direct Loan origination and disbursement functionality is added in EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 2.0 (available April 2007).

For more information on EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 1.0 enhancements related to the HERA, see the “Product Enhancements” section later in this letter.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the EDEExpress 2007-2008 is compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired. Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in EDEExpress software entry fields or directly read the contents of software grid cells. To accommodate these restrictions, EDEExpress 2007-2008 includes the following features:

- All EDEExpress fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.
- All EDEExpress fields that are shaded blue after a previously saved value has been modified also display a “-C” after the software label. The “-C” text indicates the field has been changed. If the change is made to a field that is shaded yellow, the “-C” text will replace the “-R” text after the label.
- All EDEExpress grids display “floating” text descriptions of the contents of grid cells when cells are selected. The text displays one cell above (or below, if the first cell is selected) the selected cell. The text lists Row number, Column title, and (if applicable) the current Value. Clicking once in a cell, or using the Tab key or arrow keys to move to a cell, displays the text. Clicking a second time, or using the Tab key or arrow keys to move from a cell, hides the text.
- Floating text is always enabled for the SYSADMIN user ID and always displays in the Startup Information dialog box. To disable the floating text, go to **Tools, Setup, Security Users** and create a new user ID and password. Exit EDEExpress, and then log back in with your new user ID and password. For all user IDs other than SYSADMIN, floating text is disabled by default. To enable floating text, select the **Enable 508 Grid Functionality?** checkbox on the Security Users dialog box.

Note: Users will always see the “-R” and “-C” labels added to software fields.

Product Enhancements

The following product enhancements have been incorporated into EDEExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0.

General Changes

- **Cycle References and Message Classes Updated for 2007-2008.** We updated software labels, online Help, reports, and other functionality throughout EDEExpress to reference the 2007-2008 cycle. Message classes with cycle indicators are also updated for 2007-2008 in File Management (**Tools, Setup, Global, File Management**) and on various Import and Export dialog boxes throughout EDEExpress.
- **EDEExpress Icon and Splash Screen Color Updated to Match 2007-2008 FAFSA.** The EDEExpress software's Windows icon and splash screen (which displays when you first start the software in Windows) have been color-coded yellow to match the 2007-2008 FAFSA form.
- **HERA Overview Help Topics Updated for 2007-2008.** We updated Help topics available in Global, Application Processing, Packaging, and Query online Help for 2007-2008 that provide detailed information and guidance on EDEExpress changes related to the HERA. The topics, which were originally added in EDEExpress 2006-2007, are titled "Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)," "National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant," "Graduate and Professional Student PLUS Loan (Grad PLUS)," and "Other HERA Changes Overview." The topics can be accessed by clicking **Help, Help Topics** from the EDEExpress menu bar, selecting the **Index** tab, and typing the name of the topic you want to view.

Global

The following enhancements have been made to EDEExpress 2007-2008 Global functionality (applicable to all EDEExpress releases):

Prior Year Import

- **Global Setup Field Added to Prior Year Import.** Prior Year User-Defined Queries, Setup, and File Formats Import now imports values for the Global Security Users setup field "Enable 508 Grid Functionality?" from the prior year's EDEExpress database.

ED-Initiated Import

- **Updated ED-Initiated Import Message Class for ACG Data File.** The 2007-2008 version of the ACG Data File (message class **ED2008OP**) can be imported and printed using the EDEExpress Global ED-initiated Import function. The ACG Data File contains ACG student self-identification data entered on FAFSA on the Web or FAA Access to CPS Online, or by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC), and can be used as part of your school's ACG eligibility determination and verification procedures. The report is print-only, and the data is not stored in the EDEExpress database. You can define the ACG Data File message class in **Tools, Setup, Global, ED Initiated Imports**; while this step is not required, it will enable you to locate ACG Data Files you have received more quickly for importing. A record layout for the ACG Data File is available in Section 3 of the *2007-2008 Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference*, available on the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Note: Due to a limitation in the number of comment codes that can be assigned to a given Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) transaction, ACG-related comment codes may not always display on the ISIR for ACG-eligible students. Be sure to check ACG Data Files for additional ACG eligibility information.

Application Processing

The following enhancements have been made to the EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 1.0 Application Processing module:

ISIR View, Print, and Query

- **New Dependency Status Question Related to the HERA Added to 2007-2008 ISIR View, Print, and Query Functionality.** As a result of the HERA, a new dependency status question indicating active-duty U.S. military status has been added to the 2007-2008 ISIR and is available in EDEExpress Application Processing view, print, and query functionality. The new ISIR data element added for 2007-2008 is "Are you on active duty in U.S. Armed Forces?"
- **Student Interest in Work-Study/Loans Now Indicated in Consolidated 2007-2008 ISIR Field.** The 2006-2007 ISIR questions "In addition to grants, are you interested in student loans (which you must pay back)?" and "In addition to grants, are you interested in 'work-study' (which you earn through work)?" have been combined into a single question for 2007-2008 labeled "Interested in Work-Study or Student Loans?" Valid answers to the new question are: **1** = Work-Study, **2** = Student Loans, **3** = Both, **4** = Neither, and **5** = Don't Know. This new field is available in EDEExpress Application Processing view, print, and query functionality.

- **Means-Tested Federal Benefit Program Fields Added to 2007-2008 ISIR View, Print, and Query Functionality.** As a result of changes to need analysis in the HERA, ten means-tested federal benefit program data elements have been added as 2007-2008 ISIR fields and are available in EDEExpress Application Processing view, print, and query functionality. A parent or student who receives any of these federal benefits and who has an income at a certain level may qualify for the simplified needs test (SNT) or an automatic zero EFC. The new ISIR fields added for 2007-2008 are:
 - Parent Supplemental Security Income Benefits
 - Parent Food Stamp Benefits
 - Parent Free or Reduced Price School Lunch Benefits
 - Parent TANF Benefits
 - Parent WIC Benefits
 - Student Supplemental Security Income Benefits
 - Student Food Stamp Benefits
 - Student Free or Reduced Price School Lunch Benefits
 - Student TANF Benefits
 - Student WIC Benefits
- **Enrollment Status Question Relocated.** The enrollment status question has been moved to display and print following the grade level question on the 2007-2008 ISIR report and on the ISIR Review tab.

Note: See *The 2007-2008 ISIR Guide*, available at fsadownload.ed.gov, for more detailed information on changes to the ISIR for 2007-2008.

NSLDS View and Print

- **NSLDS Data for ACG, National SMART Grant, and Grad PLUS Added to View, Print Functionality.** EDEExpress now displays and prints NSLDS data for ACG, National SMART Grant, and Grad PLUS awards that are included in the NSLDS section of the 2007-2008 ISIR. You can view or print the NSLDS data on the ISIR and NSLDS reports (**File, Print, App Express**) or view the data from any EDEExpress entry tab by selecting **View, NSLDS**.
- **Field Length for Three NSLDS Data Elements Increased.** The length of the three fields used to store the NSLDS data element “% Scheduled Award Used” has been increased from five bytes to seven bytes. EDEExpress now imports, displays, and prints the fields as seven bytes.

Packaging

The following enhancements have been made to the EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 1.0 Packaging module:

Import

- **Import Logic Added for New ISIR Field Indicating Student Interest in Work-Study/Loans.** The 2006-2007 ISIR questions “In addition to grants, are you interested in student loans (which you must pay back)?” and “In addition to grants, are you interested in “work-study” (which you earn through work)?” have been combined into a single question for 2007-2008 labeled “Interested in Work-Study or Student Loans?” When a packaging award record is created by importing ISIR data into the Packaging module, EDEExpress selects the Interested In: Employment and Interested In: Student Loans checkboxes on the Awards tab based on the ISIR value for this new field using the following logic:
 - The Interested in: Employment checkbox is selected if the answer is **1** (Work-Study) or **3** (Both)
 - The Interested in: Student Loan checkbox is selected if the answer is **2** (Student Loans) or **3** (Both)
 - Neither checkbox is selected if the answer is **4** (Neither), **5** (Don’t Know), or blank

Entry

- **Awards Tab Fields for Interested in Employment/Student Loans Added to Packaging Multiple Entry.** The Awards tab fields Interested In: Employment and Interested In: Student Loan can now be updated using Packaging Multiple Entry.

Package/Repackage Process

- **Package/Repackage Process Modified to Award Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans at Higher Loan Limits Established by the HERA.** The EDEExpress Package/Repackage process has been modified to award all subsidized (Aid Type S) and unsubsidized (Aid Type U for non-need-based or D for need-based) loans at the higher loan limits established by the HERA. EDEExpress Packaging users can also increase subsidized and unsubsidized awards manually to the new limits on Packaging records at any time. For loan limit increase details, see [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-06-02](#), posted to ifap.ed.gov on March 10, 2006.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online

Before using the EDEExpress 2007-2008, Release 1.0 interface with the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site to submit data to the Central Processing System (CPS), the Destination Point Administrator (DPA) of the TG number you use to send and receive FAFSA and ISIR correction data should verify enrollment is completed for FAA Access to CPS Online Web site services. The DPA should ensure during this process that individual users at your school performing FAFSA or ISIR correction data entry tasks are enrolled for these services.

Note: Your DPA must also enroll individual users at your school for access to the Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) and ISIR Analysis Tool Web sites, which are part of FAA Access to CPS Online. After enrollment is complete, users can access these products from the EDEExpress View menu.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online, R2T4 on the Web, and the ISIR Analysis Tool is accomplished through the SAIG Enrollment Web site, located at fsawebenroll.ed.gov.

2007-2008 EDE and Packaging Technical References

The 2007-2008 versions of the *Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference* and the *Packaging Technical Reference* provide technical guidance and record layouts for schools or other organizations that need to interface local software or mainframe systems with EDEExpress 2007-2008. The *Packaging Technical Reference* also contains worksheets you can use to help plan and implement your Packaging module setup in EDEExpress 2007-2008.

The most recent versions of both technical references can be downloaded from the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

EDExpress Benchmarking

We performed benchmarking tests on the EDExpress for Windows 2007-2008, Release 1.0 software to determine how it operates in certain operating environments. These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 MHz with 512 MB RAM.

Imports

The benchmarking results for EDExpress import files are as follows:

- Records were imported into an empty database.
- The Benchmarking Volume is the type and number of records that were imported in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box to begin the import process until the import statistics are displayed.

Imports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
ISIR Data	Windows 2000	1000	38 seconds
ISIR Data	Windows XP	1000	39 seconds

Reports

The benchmarking results for EDEExpress reports and lists are as follows:

- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records or approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the length of time starting when the user clicks OK in the EDEExpress Print dialog box through the time the operating system's Print dialog box appears.

Reports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
Document Tracking Letter	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
ISIR	Windows 2000	5 records	3 seconds
ISIR	Windows XP	5 records	3 seconds
List-Processed ISIRs	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
List-Processed ISIRs	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
Award Letters	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
Award Letters	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Packaging Setup	Windows 2000	19 pages	1 second
Packaging Setup	Windows XP	19 pages	1 second

Reminders

Back Up Your Database Regularly

You should back up your EDEExpress database file (expres78.mdb) regularly so you do not lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files after each major update to your database (for example, after updating a large group of student records), or at least once a week. You should also back up your data before and after you run the software utilities as a precautionary measure.

EDEExpress does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup system. Be sure to test your backup system regularly to verify that you can reliably restore your database.

Optimize Your Database with Software Utilities

EDEExpress contains utilities that enable you to optimize your database to prevent problems. We recommend that you run the Compact and Repair Database and Verify Database utilities at least once a week. Be sure to create a backup of your database before and after running these utilities.

Run the software utilities in the following order:

- Compact and Repair Database
- Verify Database
- Compact and Repair Database

Run the Compact and Repair Database Utility

The Compact and Repair Database utility resolves inconsistencies in record storage and improves the performance of the EDEExpress database. Running this utility at least once per week helps to prevent database problems.

Events such as a power outage or a Local Area Network (LAN) failure can corrupt your database if it occurs while users are logged into EDEExpress. If your system functions unpredictably (for example, you start getting database error messages), run the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Running the Compact and Repair Database utility on a regular basis can make your database significantly smaller and improve EDEExpress' performance. The utility reduces the size of your database by organizing and storing records more efficiently and by removing any records that have been flagged for deletion.

Warning: Before using the Compact and Repair Database utility, be sure you have space on your hard drive or LAN folder that is at least equal to three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Run the Verify Database Utility

Each student record in EDEExpress has multiple parts that are stored in different database tables. The Verify Database utility checks the integrity of relationships between these tables. If EDEExpress shuts down due to a program error or halts abnormally while you are processing data, links between various parts of a record may become damaged. Verify Database repairs these damaged links within the database.

You should always run the Compact and Repair Database utility before and after running the Verify Database utility. Running this utility at least once per week is recommended as part of your preventative maintenance routine.

Warning: Before using the Verify Database utility, ensure you have hard drive or LAN folder space available that is equal to at least three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Verify Database utility.